DIVERSITAS

Diverse Peoples, Diverse Places

FINAL CONFERENCE REPORT

Heritage Canada

90-06866/

INTRODUCTION

Although multiculturalism is a fact of life in Canada today, few Canadians understand the historic or contemporary process in which various ethnic groups build and shape their environment. For the first time, a conference on the important and neglected subject of "Diverse Peoples, Diverse Places" was held in Canada.

The theme of the conference was chosen:

- Following the success of Heritage Canada's last national conference entitled "Managing our Cities", and the interest generated by the conference for the concept of "livable" places for all Canadians, a very significant and topical issue for communities across Canada.
- In response to interest from key community development leaders, following Heritage Canada's increased involvement in the management of change in Canadian communities with the creation of its Canadian Centre for Livable Places.
- As, there was little information on the impact of "diverse peoples creating diverse places", Heritage Canada was asked by various people working in related areas such as planning and architecture, as well as community leaders, citizens' groups, politicians, and multicultural and urban professionals, to address this issue.

The conference was held in Vancouver, October 26 to 28, 1989.

OBJECTIVES

1. To present an accurate and coherent overview of ethnic settlement patterns in Canada.
2. To bring together the leading professionals, government officials and community leaders concerned with ethnic issues and ethnic studies in order to provide a forum for the mutual sharing of knowledge and ideas.
3. To underline and promote the importance of multicultural heritage among audiences of specialists and volunteers in the heritage movement.

THE PROGRAMME

Tuesday, October 24 and Wednesday, October 25

An Island Ramble (a two-day pre-conference tour)
This pre-conference tour included the historic district of downtown Nanaimo; Ladysmith, with its wonderful waterfront; Chemainus, where 23 gigantic outdoor murals tell the town's story; and finally the splendor of Victoria.

Thursday, October 26

Reps' Round Table
Representatives of Heritage Canada's provincial and territorial member groups exchanged ideas on current national issues.

Indo-Canadian Lunch and Jamatkhana and Centre Tour, Burnaby
The delegates were bused to Burnaby for a tour of the Ismaili Mosque, led by the architect of the Mosque, Mr. Bruno Freschi. Mr. Freschi explained the meaning of the architectural designs he used in drawing the plans for the Mosque, and his experience at understanding the important elements of another culture and incorporating them into his design. At lunch, the delegates heard from a representative of the Council the history of the Ismaili people and their philosophy of life.

Chinatown

The delegates were then bused to Chinatown. They visited the Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Garden, the only classical Chinese garden in Canada, and the Chinese Cultural Centre. After some free time in Chinatown, the delegates met at Ming's for a festive Chinese banquet hosted by the Chinese Benevolent Association. Business leaders from the Chinese community shared their experience in managing the built environment with the DIVERSITAS delegates.

Friday, October 27

Welcome to DIVERSITAS *

This was the first official on-site session of the conference. Heritage Canada's Executive Director, Jacques Dalibard, opened DIVERSITAS with a discussion of the issues set into a historical perspective. Three Canadians from Vancouver's multicultural community made personal statements on the meaning of heritage: Patsy George, Mobena Jaffer and Nora Patrich.

*Proceedings of the conference are not available in written form. However, the sessions were taped. The tapes are available on request.

SPEAKERS' FORUM: HOW OUR PLACES ARE CHANGING

The Speakers' Forum considered the impact of growing ethnic diversity on our Canadian places, and on our Canadian identity.

The speakers:

The Right Reverend Dr. Sang Chul Lee

Dr. Lee is the 32nd Moderator of the United Church of Canada. Born in Siberia, he received his theological education in Korea, Switzerland and Vancouver. Dr. Lee at one time preached three sermons every Sunday in three different languages. He was the Chairperson of the Church's National Ethnic Committee and now serves on the International Affairs Committee of the Toronto Conference.

Robert Fulford

Mr. Fulford is one of the most respected voices on Canadian culture. He is best known for his work with the Toronto Star and Saturday Night. In his thirty-year journalistic career, he has hosted a television show, written five books, received several honorary doctorates and a fellowship from the Asia Pacific Foundation. He is an officer of the Order of Canada.

Rosemary Brown

Rosemary Brown is a feminist writer and lecturer at the University of Victoria. She was the first black woman to hold elected office in Canada, and was a member of the British Columbia legislature for 14 years. A founding member of the Vancouver Status of Women Council and the Vancouver Crisis Centre, she was awarded a Human Right Fellowship from the United Nations in 1973.

GROWING DIVERSITY AND THE CANADIAN SENSE OF PLACE

The panelists:

The Honourable David Crombie

David Crombie is commissioner of the Royal Commission on the Future of the Toronto Waterfront. He was Secretary of State from 1986 - 1988; Mayor of Toronto, Canada's most multicultural city, for five years; Minister of National Health and Welfare 1979 and Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (1984-86).

Carole Taylor

Carole Taylor has been an alderman on the Vancouver City Council since 1986, and chairs the Standing Committee on Neighbourhood Issues and Services. She has been involved in public affairs broadcasting since 1972, when she co-hosted CTV's Canada A.M.

Michael Bliss

Michael Bliss is an author and professor of Canadian history at the University of Toronto. He has written eight books, and received numerous awards, including three National Magazine Awards. Prizes include medals from the Royal Society of Canada, the Canadian Historical Association and the American Association

for the History of Medicine.

The facilitator:

Pierre Berton

Pierre Berton, journalist, historian and media personality, is Canada's best-known popularizer of Canadian history. He has received eleven honorary degrees and is a Companion of the Order of Canada.

Dinners in Historic Homes

Friday evening, delegates were invited to join local people in their homes for dinner and a taste of B.C.'s warm hospitality.

Saturday, October 28, 1989

Canada 2000

The Honourable Mary Collins, Associate Minister of National Defence spoke about how Canadian policy can promote harmony in an increasingly diverse environment.

Concurrent Sessions: Planning for the World on our Doorstep

These six concurrent sessions provided delegates with a forum for an exchange of ideas about the history of ethnic architecture, ethnic expression in contemporary architecture and preservation, and planning to enhance diversity in a multicultural society.

Session 1

How has ethnic influence affected building and settlement in Canada?

Speaker: John Lehr

Mr. Lehr is a social geographer, and professor at the University of Winnipeg. His master thesis was on "Mormon Settlements in Southern Alberta" and his doctorate thesis on "The Process and Pattern of Ukrainian Rural Settlement in Western Canada, 1891-1914".

Session 2

How do architects respond to diverse ethnic tastes?

Speaker: Bruno Freschi

Mr. Freschi, architect, is Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning, State University of New York. He was Chief Architect for Expo'86 and has handled diverse Vancouver architectural projects from research facilities to Canada's first Ismaili Mosque.

Session 3

How can planners adapt their approaches to fit a multicultural society?

Speaker: Ray Spaxman

Mr. Spaxman, planner and consultant, is a professor at the University of British Columbia. From 1973-89, he was Director of Planning for the City of Vancouver.

Session 4

How can we evaluate ethnic buildings and districts?

Speaker: **David Chuenyan Lai**

Mr. Lai, geography professor at University of Victoria, received the Order of Canada in recognition of his work on Victoria's Chinatown.

Session 5 (held in French)

Le patrimoine de la ville cosmopolite : enjeux et défis.

Speaker: **Annick Germain**

Annick Germain, professor, Université de Montréal, is also guest professor at INRS-Urbanisation. She has written about the history of Montréal, particularly about urban and ethnic questions. She is president of Héritage Montréal.

Session 6

How can we ensure citizen participation in multicultural planning issues?

Speaker: **Jon Markoulis**

Mr. Markoulis is Vice-President of Concord Pacific Developments Ltd. He began his involvement with real estate in 1975 in San Francisco. His responsibilities today include management, sales and purchases for Concord Pacific.

DIVERSITAS Summary

At this plenary session, the chairman of each concurrent session reported on the issues discussed by the participants.

Gala Banquet and Awards Ceremony

David Lam, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia shared his perspectives on the challenges of diversity. He also presented the Gabrielle Léger Award to Pierre Berton and the Lieutenant-Governor's Award to Martin Segger in recognition of their outstanding work in the preservation of the built environment.

Finally, Mr. Lam presented a joint Heritage Canada/Heritage Society of British Columbia Achievement Award to the Secwepemc Cultural Education Society in recognition of the STSELXMEMKT (a Shushwap Social Studies Program) which develops teacher's guides for use in elementary schools in the Kamloops area.

ATTENDANCE

Three hundred and fifty people from across Canada participated in Heritage Canada's 16th Annual Conference. This is double the attendance of last year's national conference. They were representatives from the development and real estate industry, the three levels of governments, ethnic associations, and built environment activists.

Local media people also attended a number of the conference activities.

PUBLICITY

The success of the DIVERSITAS conference can certainly be attributed to the theme chosen i.e. the obvious need to study and understand the issue of diversity and the management of change in the built environment, a need felt by the various development players as we found out with the delegates' fields of expertise.

However, the increase of this year's attendance level, is most certainly due to an increase in the marketing level of the conference. The following provides a list of the marketing activities used to publicise DIVERSITAS:

1. Two direct mail campaigns (5,000 pieces each) targetting the various groups. The first one in the middle of June, the second one in the middle of August.

   Heritage Canada attributes the unprecedented level of early registrations directly to the first direct mail campaign. By the middle of August, 120 people had registered to DIVERSITAS. Previous early registrations to annual conferences were in the vicinity of 25 to 40 registrants. The second direct mail campaign brought in the remainder of registrations.

2. Advertisements in the Canadian Heritage magazine's Summer and Fall issues were directed to Heritage Canada's membership.

3. The Canadian Heritage magazine Summer issue featured Vancouver and issues directly related to the theme of the conference. It was used as part of a conference information package to potential delegates, to interested media people, to potential granting organizations, and to obtain in-kind contributions and exhibit sales.

4. One advertisement was placed in the Summer issue of Continuité to attract representatives from the Québec heritage groups.

5. A media kit including press releases and information on the speakers and main events of the conference was distributed to 500 media contacts, both nationally and locally. As a result, Annick Germain, one of our speakers, had 2 radio interviews with Radio-Canada, Vancouver; Pierre Berton was interviewed by CBC; Heritage Canada's Executive Director, Jacques Dalibard, was interviewed by Radio-Canada and the Vancouver Sun; and the conference was covered by both

   The Province and the Vancouver Sun, as well as small community publications, such as Community Digest.

6. Heritage Canada also placed notices in its four newsletters to reach additional heritage activists, planners, and preservationists.

7. Filler advertisements were produced and sent to 300 newsletters and magazine contacts.

EVALUATION

Heritage Canada had established four evaluation criterias for its DIVERSITAS conference: number of participants, evaluation form, cost to Heritage Canada, and media coverage.

As previously stated, three hundred and fifty people attended DIVERSITAS. With the exception of the Toronto conference on the occasion of Heritage Canada's 15th anniversary, DIVERSITAS had the highest attendance ever.

In the planning stages of the conference, it was decided that a deficit of approximately $50,000 should be expected for a conference of this scope and calibre. The actual was $35,605 a full $14,395 better than expected.

CONCLUSION

According to our four evaluation criterias Heritage Canada's 16th National Conference was a great success in terms of attendance, delegates' feedback and media coverage.

The delegate's feedback show that the theme was thought-provoking and relevant. Some qualified as exceptional the speeches and presentations which provided a sense of the challenges we must face as a nation as we enter the 21st century.

An obvious challenge to Heritage Canada pertaining to this and future conferences is to make them accessible to an increasing number of Canadians.